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News Releases and other News Material

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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

Remarks-

Prepared for Delivery by
Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy
Forum on Farm Income and Agricultural Policy
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

August 2, 1993

I'm delighted to welcome you to USDA's Forum on Farm Income and Agricultural Policy. This is the third in a series of forums we are holding on issues that are critical to the future of our nation and of the agriculture sector. As you know, we've already held one on hunger, one on crop insurance reform, and we'll have others to follow very soon.

Speaking as the Secretary of Agriculture, I can tell you that the Clinton Administration is committed to making a positive difference in the future of agriculture. That is why we have come together here today to find ways to improve the income of American farmers -- and especially family farmers. This is income that will in turn benefit all of rural America.

I know many of you have heard me say this before, but I'll say it again: This Secretary of Agriculture and this Administration believe that one of the best and most effective economic revitalization tools for rural America is a marked increase in income to producers.

As many of you also know, we've already used our discretionary authority to take several steps for the purpose of benefiting producers and for the end goal of increasing farm income. For example:

-- During the first month we were in office, we opened up the Farmer Owned Reserve to the greatest allowable maximum within the Farm Bill.

-- We used our discretionary authority to drop one of the double discounts on corn.

-- And we suspended farm foreclosures pending administrative review.

-- On the trade front, we've done a lot. Under the Export Enhancement Program, we announced an opportunity for sales of 32 million metric tons of wheat to 30 countries and regions around the world for the 1993-94 international marketing year. This is a very aggressive, credible, and fair step to protect the American farmer from unfair competition. It will also boost sales of U.S. wheat, and further our attempts to move the world toward a fair and open global market.

-- And in the April Summit in Vancouver, President Clinton announced an important Food for Progress agreement with Russia. Russia has traditionally been one of our largest export customers for U.S. grain, and this agreement will help maintain the U.S. presence in that very important market.

-- We've also taken steps to help those producers who are unfortunately feeling the impact of flooding and excessive rain -- and now drought. We are assisting them in coping with the disaster and in trying to stabilize any major instability in their farming operations.

But even with these steps we have a long way to go. People all over the world take for granted that American agriculture will provide a reliable, economical supply of food. But, as all of you know, that doesn't happen easily. It takes the hard work of millions of farmers, ranchers, food processors, and exporters.

And it takes asking tough and thoughtful questions about where we want to go with farm policy:

-- How can we make our agricultural programs more flexible and adaptable, more responsive to economic and social change?

-- How can we keep U.S. agriculture efficient and competitive in a changing global marketplace?

-- How can we make our agricultural programs work better to achieve their goals?

Actually, that question should be even more basic -- how can we be sure that the program goals themselves still serve the needs of modern agriculture?

It is my firm belief that modern agriculture must stand on two strong legs --a solid domestic farm policy and a solid international trade policy. Neither leg can go very far, or very fast without the other. Neither one is a substitute for the other.

That is why our forum today is divided into two parts. The morning session will be devoted to addressing issues concerning farm income and farm policy. The afternoon session will address agricultural trade and development policy and export programs.

Though the sessions are divided, make no mistake -- they are two sides of the very same coin. They are two vital supports of the very same body. And today we'll be looking closely at both of them.

On the domestic side, the major price and income support programs of the Commodity Credit Corporation represent the heart of U.S. farm policy -- both by virtue of their longevity and their cost. They provide a measure of stability to the agricultural sector, and thus ensure society an abundant supply of food and fiber at reasonable cost.

Yet, a growing number of economists and policy analysts believe that the current commodity policy is outdated, and may even now be detrimental to the needs of modern agriculture.

On the international side, there is hardly a farmer in this country today who doesn't understand how vital exports are to American agriculture. In recent years, sales to foreign markets have amounted to roughly a quarter of the value of U.S. farm output. Consumers overseas will buy more than half of this year's wheat crop; -- 40 percent of the rice crop; -- and more than a third of the soybean and cotton harvests.

At the same time, consumer-oriented and other high value food products such as meats, fruits and vegetables and processed food products now account for more than half the value of all U.S. agricultural exports. Sales figures like these are essential to maintaining current levels of farm income and the economic vitality of rural communities.

There is nothing theoretical about the dependence of this nation's farm income on exports. As exports slipped in the first half of the 1980's, we saw depressed farm incomes, falling land values, and economic pain in many of our rural communities. In fact, USDA's largest export promotion program -- Targeted Export Assistance/Market Promotion Program -- was a direct response to that crisis.

Generally speaking, nations tend to treat their agriculture as a special case with special domestic policies. But the trend today is toward more market orientation and less government interference and protectionism. It is happening in many countries around the world, and it is indeed happening right here in the United States.

For example, our two most recent comprehensive farm bills -- the 1985 and 1990 Acts -- incorporated market-oriented reforms (and greater environmental awareness) into many longstanding farm support programs. Another major factor driving policy change is the urgent need -- and this Administration's firm commitment -- to address the federal budget deficit.

In conclusion, I want to thank you for coming. And state again that it is imperative that U.S. agricultural policy consist of a domestic farm policy and an international trade policy that best focus our resources to increase farm income and benefit agriculture as a whole -- and by extension, rural communities as well.

With the aid of your considerable expertise and understanding, we are here today to reinvigorate farm policy; we are here today to be creative in our thinking; and we are here today to step back from yesterday and take a fresh look at tomorrow.

We'd like to see American agriculture standing firmly on two good, solid legs -- well-positioned -- strongly positioned -- confidently positioned -- for whatever the future brings.

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Release No. 0649.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

Outline of Remarks Prepared for Delivery by
Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy
at the REA National Conference
Baltimore, Md.

August 3, 1993

I'm delighted to have been invited to attend your conference. It gives me an opportunity to personally congratulate those of you in REA on the major role you have played in the last 57 years in providing electric and telephone service for rural areas in this country. You -- and your predecessors -- have all done a commendable and praiseworthy job.

I'm delighted to be introduced by my good friend Jim Huff. I got to know and respect Jim when we worked together on a number of projects in Mississippi. In fact, I was the first witness at Jim's confirmation hearing for the position as Administrator of REA.

RURAL AMERICA

As many of you may know, I'm from Yazoo City, Mississippi, in the Mississippi Delta -- one of the poorest parts of the country. Average income there is still about \$10,000 a year, and running water is still a luxury to many folks in that part of the nation. One of the proudest moments of my former congressional career was when I was able to utilize the resources of the Farmers Home Administration -- working with people like Jim Huff and others -- to bring water to a community in Blue Hill, Miss.

I'll never forget the look on a little girl's face as she held her tiny hand in the cool, clear water running from the tap in the sink in her very own kitchen. I must admit that it really brought home to me -- on a small scale, but in a very direct emotional way -- what it must have been like when REA first brought electricity and light to rural America.

One of the main reasons that I took the job as Secretary of Agriculture is because I want to make that same kind of real, immediate, and positive difference in the lives of rural Americans today.

And I know I have a kindred spirit in Bill Clinton. . . the man from the tiny town of Hope, Arkansas. We understand the concerns and hopes of rural Americans. . . and we're committed to addressing their concerns and making their hopes a reality. We remember where we came from, and we know that America as a whole cannot prosper if rural America is left behind.

Before I review some of the things we're doing to strengthen and develop the rural parts of our nation, I want to stress right up front that we're counting on you -- the REA staff in the field -- along with those at headquarters -- and the borrowers with whom you work -- to be partners with us in this crucial endeavor. We need your hands-on experience -- we need your know-how -- and we're not too proud or too shortsighted to ask for it. We know the vital role you have played in rural development for the past 50 years, and we need you to continue to help us shape a brighter future for rural America.

THE CLINTON RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

When I said that the Clinton Administration is taking aggressive steps to change the face of rural America, I meant it!

Just look at the President's rural development plan. It goes right to the heart of the problems we face. The President knows that if we're going to help rural America get solidly back on its feet, we need to start by solidly investing in rural Americans again.

His 1994 budget took a huge first step. As you know, he proposed investing almost \$2 billion more in rural economic development. Let's quickly look at some of the specific areas, bearing in mind that -- given REA's tremendous capability to manage and operate major programs -- the potential exists for REA to broaden its role.

Business Development

The President's plan recognizes that the first order of business in rural America is business -- to put rural Americans back to work. We intend to invest more in loans, grants, and technical assistance to give small businesses a boost in starting up or in hiring more employees.

Water and Sewer

Most Americans take clean water for granted. But only seven years before the end of the twentieth century, more than one million American households still lack either hot or cold running water, toilets, or bathtubs. Now -- if we can provide the basic amenities of life to astronauts in a space capsule 240,000 miles from earth in outer space, then I think we can certainly do the same for our neighbors 240 miles from the city.

I know that we can bring running water into homes in rural America, and we will do it in the four years of this Administration. This offers a perfect opportunity for REA to broaden its role and expand its mission.

We also intend to invest more in water and waste disposal assistance to smaller communities that have struggled with compliance with the Clean Water Act.

Housing

Nearly half of our rural development budget is targeted for housing. That's financing for 108,000 new units. That's 27 percent more than last year. And that's one of the largest increases ever. For struggling families, a home is more than a place to live and raise children -- it's an asset for the future and a down payment on the American dream.

Health Care and Emergency Services

We all know that rural Americans have often suffered more than anyone else because of inadequate health care. Because of this, they certainly stand to gain from the health care plan that the Clinton task force will soon present.

But we need to start doing something now to close the huge gap in rural access to health care and emergency services. Out in the country, people can bleed to death -- houses can burn to the ground -- before help ever arrives. We need to expand and build health care facilities, and boost fire and rescue services all across America.

Telecommunications

In these days of CNN, satellites, and fax machines, knowledge is power -- and power is access to computerized databases that are our new national libraries. But many rural Americans don't have access to this information. You might say they don't have admission tickets for the 21st century.

That's why we propose to help modernize and enhance telecommunications capabilities in rural communities -- to give businesses, health care providers, educators, and students access to computer services across America.

THE CLINTON ECONOMIC PLAN

To wrap up my discussion of the President's rural development plan, I'd like to make one last observation: The fact that Bill Clinton asked for an increase in funding -- even in these difficult economic times -- reveals more about his deep and abiding commitment to revitalize rural America than anything else I could possibly say.

This Administration is convinced that revitalizing the rural economy hinges on revitalizing the national economy. And that revitalizing the national economy hinges on reducing the worst Federal deficit in the history of our country -- a deficit of more than \$300 billion.

We know we have a problem. We have a national debt of \$4.1 trillion. That's \$16,000 for every man, woman, and child in our country. It's a disgrace! Our debt is so big that it's eating up our budget -- \$200 million in interest alone!

That's why the President is making this address tonight. That's why the budget vote on Thursday and Friday is so incredibly important. We're trying to turn this economy around. We're trying to tell the public that this election in November was about something.

If the proposed budget is knocked down, it just means more of the same old thing, no change, more of the status quo, and we don't have an opportunity to do the kinds of things that we believe need to be done.

This deficit reduction program will mean the largest deficit reduction in history -- some \$500 billion . . . and lock those savings into a special Deficit Reduction Trust Fund.

It provides investments to spur economic growth. It going to keep interest rates low, helping anyone who borrows money -- and that's all of us -- and will pump billions of dollars of new private sector capital into the economy.

It targets incentives for business to create 8 million jobs in the next 4 years. The working poor will get a break. . . people who make the most will pay the most. The wealthiest 6 percent will pay at least three-fourths of the new taxes. And older Americans will be protected from severe cuts in Social Security, Medicare, and veteran's benefits.

Admittedly, it will take us a while to achieve a healthy economy, but the President's plan will put us back in control of our economic destiny. It recognizes that, after years of government policies that failed us, there are no quick fixes -- just long-term solutions. It may be a tough sell, but it is the responsible thing to do.

REORGANIZATION OF USDA

The last matter I want to discuss with you is the reorganization of USDA. We're going to do the right thing. We want to create a streamlined, more efficient USDA.

Many are saying that USDA and REA are out-of-date, out-of-touch. That means it is up to us to review, reinvent, and reassert. If our review shows we're viable, and we're convinced of our viability, we should be emphatic about it. We should not be afraid to assert ourselves and say so.

But if -- based on close scrutiny of our programs in light of the 1993 fiscal circumstances -- we find we are not quite able to make it, we should not be afraid to admit that, and to reinvent, to make some changes. As my mother told me, "Nothing is constant but change."

As you know, we have taken a very close look at the functions and future of all the Department's 42 different divisions, including REA. I'd like to take them down from 42 to 30. Nothing is sacrosanct; everything is on the chopping block.

We will make changes. We are resolute. You can expect to see some definite decisions announced some time in the first half of September in connection with the report of Vice President Gore's Task Force on Reinventing Government.

I bet you didn't know I could read your minds right now. You're wondering, What will this mean for REA and its borrowers? I can't tell you today. I wish I could. I will say this: REA has a role to play. REA has a viable mission, and I think it can be expanded. I will argue -- and I have argued -- against anyone who wants to cut REA out of USDA's programs. I'll fight anybody who wants to dismiss the viability of REA in this century and beyond.

But I repeat: change is coming. Our world is changing -- our country is changing -- rural areas are changing -- and REA and its borrowers must also change to be able to meet new challenges, new demands, and new opportunities.

We know that REA employees and the rural electric and telephone borrowers have the dedication, the experience, and the know-how to serve our rural areas. And we believe we can put that expertise to work in a variety of ways.

For example, as I mentioned earlier, you could work with borrowers to bring better housing -- or central water and sewer systems -- or business development -- or more advanced telecommunications technology to rural residents.

Some programs might not flow directly through REA borrowers, but they could be encouraged to take an active role in creating an awareness of the programs within the rural communities -- and in working with potential applicants.

Farsighted rural development programs can help meet many needs of rural America. As we place all government programs on the table to be evaluated, strong programs that look to the future will be the ones that withstand the test.

You should be pleased that REA has already begun to strengthen and streamline. Your Management Task Force is working to help REA better serve the public while fostering a positive work environment for employees. That fits right in with my promise to make USDA customer-friendly, employee-friendly, in fact, just plain old friendly.

Part of that promise involves encouraging borrowers to broaden and diversify the types of organizations and groups they work with in rural America. In order to do this, they must also broaden and diversify their boards of directors and their staff members to better reflect the nation as a whole.

In closing, as you all are aware, this Administration has taken steps to change some of the current funding mechanisms available within REA. But, at the same time, we want to assure that those borrowers facing hardships are still being given special consideration and access to lower interest loans. We want them to be able to continue to function and provide quality services, as they have so well in the past.

Let me say that I'm incredibly proud to be part of an Administration that has made economic revitalization a cornerstone of its 1994 budget. We intend to make sure that people in rural America are included fully in that revitalization -- and that they have access to the basic services which other areas of the country take for granted.

I look forward to working with you in REA to make that dream a reality.

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New Releases-

Release No. 0639.93
Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623

USDA TO USE VEGETABLE-BASED INK FOR ALL PRINTING

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy told members of the American Soybean Association meeting in Denver yesterday that all printing ordered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be done with vegetable-based ink.

Soybean oil is a major source of vegetable-based inks.

Espy told the association's annual meeting that all USDA ordered printing -- which amounts to some \$26 million annually -- would be done with ink derived from agricultural products. Prior to today's action, only in-house printing had been done with vegetable-based ink. Espy's announcement expands the use of vegetable-based ink to all contract printing.

"I have been one of soy-ink's biggest fans for years," Espy told the group, adding: "I'm enthusiastic about alternative uses in agriculture and soybeans seem to be one of the most promising commodities on the horizon. They can be used in paints and varnishes, fatty acids, resins and plastics."

Vegetable oils are gaining popularity over petroleum in the manufacture of printing inks in the United States because they are derived from a domestically produced and renewable resource.

Soybean oil has emerged as a reliable resource for making printing inks. Linseed oil, a vegetable oil which is derived from flax, has been used in making inks for decades. Inks produced from other vegetable oils are in the experimental stage.

Espy said that from now on petroleum-based inks can be used for USDA printing jobs only when vegetable-based inks cannot be supplied in time to meet delivery dates.

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Release No. 0641.93
 Robert Feist (202) 720-6789
 Marci Hilt (202) 720-4026

CCC INTEREST RATE FOR AUGUST REMAINS AT 3-1/2 PERCENT

WASHINGTON -- Aug. 2 -- Commodity loans disbursed in August by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 3-1/2 percent interest rate, according to Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of the CCC.

The 3-1/2 percent interest rate is unchanged from July's 3-1/2 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury in August.

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Release No. 0644.93
 Becky Unkenholz (202) 720-8998
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USDA TO CONDUCT PECAN REFERENDUM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 -- Eligible pecan growers, grower-shellors and importers can vote Oct. 4-6 on whether to continue the Pecan Promotion and Research Plan.

L.P. Massaro, acting administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service, said that to be eligible to vote, growers, grower-shellors and importers must have produced or imported pecans sometime from Sept. 1, 1991 through Aug. 31, 1993. For the plan to continue, it must be approved by a majority of those voting in the referendum.

Eligible growers, grower-shellors and importers must register Sept. 27-Oct. 1. Ballots will be distributed at the time of registration.

Growers and grower-shellors must register in person at local offices of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. Importers may either register in person at local ASCS offices or by writing to the Research and Promotion Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2535-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Mail registrations must be received by AMS on or before Oct. 1.

Voting must be by mail and ballots must be postmarked during the Oct. 4-6 voting period. Ballots postmarked before Oct. 4 or after Oct. 6 will not be counted.

The pecan plan has been in effect since May 1, 1992, and operates under the Pecan Promotion and Research Act of 1990.

Details on the referendum will be published in the Aug. 3 Federal Register. For more information contact Arthur L. Pease at the address given above for the AMS Research and Promotion Branch; telephone (202) 720-6930.

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Release No. 0645.93
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NEW SOYBEANS RESIST MEXICAN BEAN BEETLE

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3--A new soybean breeding line called HC83-193 could lead to higher-yielding semidwarf soybean varieties that resist Mexican bean beetles.

In field tests, HC83-193 produced about eight bushels more beans per acre than a breeding line with similar beetle resistance released six years ago. It matures up to nine days earlier than previously released pest-resistant lines, has higher quality seed and is less susceptible to seed loss from pods before harvest.

The new line was developed by U.S. Department of Agriculture agronomist Richard L. Cooper and entomologist Ronald B. Hammond of Ohio State University, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. It is designed for use by plant breeders in developing new commercial soybean varieties.

HC83-193 is best suited for the southern part of the Midwest where the Mexican bean beetle is the most destructive insect pest on most soybean varieties. The chewing insects feed on soybean leaves and, in high populations, can reduce bean yields. The new line also has shown some resistance to pests other than the Mexican bean beetle.

The new soybeans contain naturally occurring chemicals that slow the growth of the Mexican bean beetle larvae. In greenhouse tests, none of the larvae on the beans survived to become pupae, according to Cooper, who works for USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Wooster, Ohio.

By comparison, Cooper said, 76 percent of the insects survived to pupate on Pixie, a popular semidwarf variety, and 84 percent survived on the Elf semidwarf variety.

Cooper and Hammond developed the new breeding line by crossing the Elf soybean line and an insect-resistant line called D75-10169, then selecting the most resistant plants through eight generations of the crossbred offspring.

Cooper and Hammond said the new line has yields nearly as great as those of susceptible varieties, citing an HC83-193 test site which yielded nearly 80 bushels per acre.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Contact for details Richard L. Cooper, Corn and Soybean Research, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Telephone: (216) 263-3875.

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Release No. 0646.93

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USDA PROPOSES TO CHANGE REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING BIRD QUARANTINE STATIONS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3--The U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed today to allow any person who qualifies to open a privately owned quarantine station for imported birds.

"Because of the decreasing number of these importations, we now have sufficient personnel to inspect all privately owned quarantine stations that the bird-importing industry is likely to need," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator for veterinary services in USDA's Animal and Plant Inspection Service. "We believe we can provide all needed inspection services, because bird imports have dropped significantly in the past few years.

"Until now APHIS limited the number of privately owned quarantine stations because the agency simply didn't have enough inspectors. This resulted in periodic lotteries to determine which applicants for new facilities could be accepted. With reduced demand, such lotteries are no longer necessary," Johnson said.

He explained that the reduced imports have resulted from export restrictions in foreign countries. After the full implementation of the Wild Bird Conservation Act, the number of bird-import permit applications submitted to APHIS is likely to drop even further. The Act, which became effective in October of 1992, bans trade in 10 species of birds and limits the importation of other birds to help restore populations of threatened and endangered birds in their natural environment.

APHIS quarantines birds being imported into the United States to prevent introduction of communicable diseases to U.S. poultry. Privately owned facilities supplement APHIS-owned animal import centers.

Included with the APHIS proposal are minor additions to the standards for chick-holding and hatching areas. These additions affect ratites--birds of the ostrich family--which can be imported through privately owned facilities only as eggs that are then hatched at the facility.

The proposed rule change is scheduled for publication in the Aug. 3 Federal Register.

Written comments will be accepted if received by Oct. 4. An original and three copies should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. The comments should refer to docket number 92-162-1.

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Release No. 0648.93

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Mary Dixon

ESPY ISSUES STRICTER RULES FOR COOKED MEAT PATTIES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said today the U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued stricter cooking temperatures and other requirements for processing plants that make cooked, partially-cooked or char-marked ground meat products.

"These new rules are designed to protect the public's health by reducing the risk of foodborne illness from ground meat products," Espy said. "We must continually work to improve our guidelines for keeping our meat supply safe."

The products governed by the rules, including hamburgers, Salisbury steaks, breaded chopped veal steaks, and beef and pork sausage patties, are packaged for restaurants, hotels, other institutional kitchens and households.

"These rules have cooking and cooling requirements to control bacteria," said Eugene Branstool, assistant secretary of agriculture for marketing and inspection services. "Because bacteria grow rapidly at room temperatures, the rules require that heat-treated meat patties must be cooled to 40 degrees F or cooler within two hours. We know it is important to properly prepare pre-cooked meats just as it is important for consumers to cook meats properly in their homes."

"The new rules require plants making fully cooked patties to heat them at a high enough temperature and long enough to destroy any harmful bacteria that may be present," said Branstool. To ensure safety, the plant must measure temperature at the patty's center. The rule offers a choice of safe time and temperature combinations. For example, for patties heated to 157 degrees F, the holding time is 10 seconds but for 155 degrees F, the holding time is 16 seconds.

Under the new rules, partially cooked patties must be heated to at least 140 degrees F at the center.

USDA will also require that packages of partially cooked or char-marked meats be clearly labeled with cooking instructions for those who prepare food in the home and in restaurants, schools, and other institutional kitchens.

"Labeling requirements in the new rules are needed because some ground meat products may appear ready-to-eat even though they are not fully cooked," Branstool said.

"Under the new rules, labels for those products that are not fully cooked must have instructions -- prominently placed next to the product name."

For example, for partially cooked patties, these words must appear: "Partially cooked: For Safety, Cook Until Well Done (Internal Meat Temperature 160 degrees F)" in lettering at least half the size of the largest letter in the product name, according to Branstool.

The rules also have provisions to prevent cross-contamination of ready-to-package patties by raw meat, Branstool said. He said they require plants handle cooked patties and raw meat separately -- preferably in different rooms.

The new USDA rules state that if separate rooms are not possible, plant employees must thoroughly clean an entire area, including equipment and table tops, and must wear clean outer garments and wash their hands before handling patties that are ready to be packaged.

The rules were published in the Aug. 2 Federal Register and will become effective Sept. 2.

The stricter rules for cooked meat patties is one of several changes Espy is making to improve guidelines and inspection for meat. Some of the changes include mandatory cooking and handling labels on all raw meat and poultry products and organizing a special unit to conduct unannounced inspections.

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Release No. 0650.93
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USDA PROPOSES PROHIBITING ADDING WATER TO GRAIN

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service today proposed prohibiting the application of water to grain except for processing purposes.

The prohibition would apply to all grain handlers, not just those receiving official inspection and weighing services under the United States Grain Standards Act.

According to FGIS acting administrator David Galliart, water, which is sometimes applied to suppress dust, can be too easily misused to increase the weight of grain. Externally-applied water also can degrade the quality of the grain.

Written comments must be submitted on or before November 29, 1993, to George Wollam, FGIS, USDA, Room 0624 South Building, P.O. Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454; or, automatic telecopier (202) 720-4628.

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Release No. 0651.93
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TWO COUNTRIES ADDED TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA WHEAT FLOUR INITIATIVE UNDER EEP

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced that Gambia and Somalia have been added to the list of Sub-Saharan countries eligible to purchase wheat flour under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of wheat flour will be made to buyers through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in these African markets.

This allocation will be valid until June 30, 1994, as provided for in the invitation for offers. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

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Release No. 0652.93
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U.S. TO DONATE ADDITIONAL WHEAT TO KYRGYZSTAN

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--The United States will donate additional wheat to Kyrgyzstan under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food for Progress program according to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The \$8 million amendment to Kyrgyzstan's fiscal 1993 Food for Progress agreement will provide about 50,000 metric tons of wheat and related ocean transportation costs. This action brings the total value of the fiscal 1993 program to \$18 million.

"Food aid donations help both recipient countries and U.S. farmers and taxpayers," said Goldthwait.

"Kyrgyzstan benefits by getting much needed wheat," he said. "U.S. farmers benefit because donations help take commodity supplies off the U.S. market at times when those supplies are excessive. As a result, this can enhance producer prices at a time when this is needed.

"In addition, these donations may help reduce budget outlays because they may reduce government expenditures under the target price provisions of the domestic farm program," said Goldthwait.

Under the Food for Progress program, USDA provides commodities to needy countries to encourage agricultural reform.

The wheat will be purchased by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service using Public Law 480, Title I funds. The government of Kyrgyzstan will arrange ocean transportation.

The supply period for this donation is fiscal 1993.

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Release No. 0653.93
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U.S. TO DONATE BUTTER FOR USE IN RUSSIA

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--The United States will donate \$6.8 million worth of butter to Russia through Land O' Lakes under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Section 416(b) program.

According to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, the 5,000 metric tons of butter will be monetized in St. Petersburg through Summit Limited, based in Russia.

The project goal is to provide revenues to a revolving fund which would finance appropriate investments for the purchase of dairy and feed processing equipment, and other needed farm inputs, as well as the correlating training/technical assistance.

The supply period for this donation is fiscal 1993.

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Release No. 0654.93
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U.S. TO DONATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TO BELARUS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--The U.S. Department of Agriculture will donate approximately \$20 million worth of U.S. agricultural commodities to the Republic of Belarus, according to Christopher E. Goldthwait, Acting General Sales Manager of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

Commodities include 100,000 metric tons of wheat and 25,000 metric tons of soybean meal. The commodities will be monetized and the proceeds used to increase grain production in the Republic of Belarus. Ocean and inland transportation will be paid by the Government of Belarus.

The donation was made under USDA's Food For Progress Program. The program is administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. The supply period for this donation is fiscal 1993.

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Release No. 0656.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO FARMER-OWNED RESERVE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced changes in rules governing operations of the Farmer-Owned Reserve program to allow rotation of farm-stored 1992-crop barley, corn and grain sorghum and an additional signup period for 1992-crop barley, corn and grain sorghum non-recourse loans.

Producers with regular farm-stored 1992-crop barley, corn and grain sorghum non-recourse loans who intend to enter the reserve may request rotation of the commodity prior to entering the commodity into the reserve.

As soon as they receive permission from the county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office, producers must move the commodity serving as collateral for a non-recourse loan to an approved warehouse. They must then submit a negotiable warehouse receipt to the county ASCS office as collateral for their farm-stored loan. The warehouse receipt will be returned to the producer after the agreement is approved and the replacement commodity is in storage on the farm.

There will also be an additional Farmer-Owned Reserve signup period for all producers with outstanding 1992-crop barley, corn and grain sorghum non-recourse price support loans.

Producers who did not state their intentions to enter the reserve by April 30 must now do so by Aug. 31 to qualify. Also, loans on these same commodities with a maturity date before Sept. 30 must be extended to that date before a reserve loan will be approved.

Espy said producers should contact their local county ASCS office for more information.

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Release No. 0657.93
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USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON 1994 FEED GRAIN PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today asked for public comments on the 1994 acreage reduction program percentages for corn, grain sorghum and barley. These percentages must be announced by Sept. 30.

Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, said USDA is also looking for public comments on whether to exempt malting barley producers -- as a condition of eligibility for loans, purchases and payments -- from complying with acreage reduction requirements.

Weber said CCC is proposing that the 1994 acreage reduction program percentage be set between 0 to 12.5 percent from corn and 0 to 20 percent for grain sorghum and barley. The Agricultural Act of 1949 sets the oats acreage reduction program at zero percent.

CCC is required to propose options for the feed grain program, accompanied by an analysis that includes estimated planted acreage, production, domestic and export use, ending stocks, season average producer price, program participation rate and cost to the federal government.

Details of the CCC's 1994 acreage reduction program will be published in the Aug. 5 Federal Register.

To be considered, comments must be received by Sept. 20 and may either be faxed to (202) 690-1346 or mailed to: Grains Analysis Division, USDA/ASCS, Room 3742-S, P.O. box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013-2415. All comments will be available for public inspection in room 3740 of USDA's South Building at 14th and Independence Aves., Washington, D.C., from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The regulatory impact analysis on the 1994 feed grain program may be obtained from the same address.

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Release No. 0658.93
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USDA ALLOWS EXTENSION OF 1990-CROP FARMER-OWNED RESERVE WHEAT LOANS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today that producers will be allowed to extend, for an additional 6 months, 1990-crop wheat pledged as collateral for Farmer-Owned Reserve loans.

"The optional extension will permit a more orderly marketing of 1990-crop wheat remaining in the Farmer-Owned Reserve," Espy said.

Farmer-Owned Reserve loans for 1990-crop wheat were authorized on Dec. 13, 1990. As of June 13, 1990-crop wheat pledged as collateral for these loans totaled 25.2 million bushels.

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Release No. 0659.93
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Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA REQUESTS COMMENTS ON UPLAND COTTON COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) today requested public comment on the list of upland cotton qualities eligible for the coarse count adjustment in the 1993 marketing year (Aug. 1, 1993-July 31, 1994) and future marketing years.

The current schedule of CCC loan premiums and discounts for U.S. upland cotton expresses the "grade" as separate color, grade and leaf components, starting with the 1993 marketing year. The list of qualities eligible for the coarse count adjustment, as expressed in the schedule of CCC loan premiums and discounts, must be revised to conform with the new standards. CCC proposes to make the qualities that were eligible for the coarse count adjustment under the old grading system eligible under the new grading system.

Details will appear in the Aug. 6 Federal Register. To be considered, comments must be received no later than Sept. 7 by the director, Fibers and Rice Analysis Division, USDA-ASCS, Room 3760-S, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013-2415.

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Release No. 0660.93
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Marci Hilt (202) 270-4026

USDA ADJUSTS PAYMENT RATE FOR HAYING AND GRAZING OF CRP LAND

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4 -- Producers who had already been authorized to hay and graze land in the Conservation Reserve Program because of natural disaster will have their payments reduced by only 25 percent, instead of 50 percent, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said today.

"We are now requiring only a 25 percent reduction in payment in the interest of fairness to producers who are facing severe economic losses," Espy said. "It also means lower-priced feed will be available for producers who need it."

Espy said that all counties in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin that are presidentially-declared disaster areas are automatically eligible for haying and grazing of this acreage.

"Criteria for approval of counties in other states has been changed now to consider loss of forage only. Previously, loss of both forage and other feed crops were taken into account," he said.

"On July 9 emergency haying and grazing of CRP acreage was authorized because of severe weather conditions during the 1993 growing season," Espy said. "At that time, producers who chose to hay and graze their CRP land had to agree to a 50 percent reduction in their FY 1994 annual CRP rental payments."

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Release No. 0661.93
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Steve Lombardi (202) 720-4026

USDA PROPOSES TO BRING CANINE TEST REGULATIONS IN LINE WITH NEW SCIENCE

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5--The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to amend the regulations for the testing of seven viral vaccines used to prevent disease in canines to increase the validity of test results.

The proposed rule changes methods or requirements for testing certain veterinary biological products used to prevent canine diseases. Four killed and three live viral vaccines are included in the new rule. For each vaccine, the rule would permit current testing requirements to be replaced, new test methods and procedures to be used, or some current restrictions to be relaxed.

"It is necessary for us to keep our regulations consistent with current scientific knowledge," said John Payne, acting director of biotechnology, biologics and environmental protection for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. APHIS is responsible for evaluating veterinary biological products for purity, safety, potency and efficacy.

The proposed rule was published in the July 23 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received by Sept. 21. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 92-132-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments received may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141 South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to inspect comments are encouraged to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

For further information contact: Robert B. Miller, Chief Staff Veterinarian, Veterinary Biologics, BBEP, APHIS, USDA, Room 838 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782, (301) 436-5863.

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Release No. 0662.93
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USDA REVISES SWINE BRUCELLOSIS REGULATIONS; ADDS FERAL SWINE PROVISIONS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed to revise the requirements for validating swine herds and states as being free of brucellosis, a bacterial disease that affects both livestock and humans.

"We believe the revisions will facilitate our goal of completing the eradication of brucellosis from domestic swine by 1996," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator for veterinary services in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

By regulation, USDA classifies states, herds and individual animals according to their brucellosis status. The state's status affects requirements for moving swine interstate. The eradication program for domestic swine is in its final phase, as USDA currently recognizes 41 states as being "validated-free" for brucellosis.

The proposal standardizes and simplifies the options that states seeking to become "validated-free" have to meet. The amount of testing currently required would also be reduced. The proposal would extend to 24 months the qualification period that a state must test its breeding swine to attain brucellosis-free status. Each state would be allowed to only have one herd be diagnosed with brucellosis during this period, rather than the currently allowed infection rate of three percent of all herds in the state.

The proposal also would add measures to interstate requirements to minimize possible contact between feral (wild) and domestic swine, reducing the opportunities for diseasetransmission.

Brucellosis, also called Bang's disease, is a highly contagious disease that causes abortion, infertility, and lameness in swine. Cattle, dogs, horses, elk, and other animals can also be infected with brucellosis. Infected animals can transmit the disease to humans. Primarily at risk are slaughterhouse workers, farmers, veterinarians, and consumers of unpasteurized milk.

In humans, brucellosis--often called undulant fever--can cause severe flu-like symptoms, such as recurrent fever, weakness, fatigue, insomnia, poor appetite, headache, and general malaise. The disease can also cause people to be nervous, irritable, or depressed. Bouts of undulant fever can last several weeks to several years and symptoms may recur indefinitely.

The proposed regulations were published in the July 23 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if received by Sept. 21. An original and three copies of any comments should refer to docket number 92-044-1 and should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments received may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141 South Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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Release No. 0663.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

USDA EXTENDS TO AUG. 16 KEY FARM PROGRAM DATES IN WATER-SOAKED MIDWEST

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy has extended to Aug. 16 three farm program sign-up or reporting dates in nine flood-ravaged midwestern states to give producers in those states added flexibility in coping with their losses.

These actions, announced July 6, (USDA release no. 0545.93) carried an original deadline of July 31:

- ◆ Extend Crop Reporting Dates. ASC state committees have the authority to extend the final reporting date. The reporting dates for spring seeded crops is being extended to Aug. 16 in states affected by the unprecedented adverse weather conditions. ARP program participants who have reported their crop acreages will be given this window of opportunity to amend their reports and to make additional program choices, such as the 0/92 program.

- ◆ Availability of 0/92 Program. Availability of 0/92 program for farmers who have enrolled in the farm program and have been prevented from planting or have failed acres. These farmers are eligible to participate in the 0/92 program.

- ◆ Extend time for Requesting Prevented Planting Credit. The prevented planting deadline will be extended. Where the state committee has extended the deadline, producers will have until Aug. 16 to file a request for prevent-ed planting credit. This action will provide farmers with additional time to make such a request.

States included in today's extension are: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

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EDITORS: A USDA Fact Sheet issued July 23 (USDA Release no. 0612.93) lists actions taken by USDA to assist farmers in the water-soaked midwest states. It was updated today to reflect the above extensions.

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Release No. 0664.93
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Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

SCIENTISTS DISCOVER GENE MARKERS FOR RUST RESISTANCE IN BEANS

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5--For the first time, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Michigan State University scientists have discovered markers for three genes that fight off costly rust disease in bean plants.

Phillip N. Miklas of USDA's Agricultural Research Service said the markers--pieces of genetic material called DNA--are tightly linked to three genes that help navy, pinto and other types of dry beans resist the rust-causing fungus *Uromyces appendiculatus*, which can lower yields by up to 80 percent.

"Greater resistance to rust disease will help reduce the need for applying chemical fungicides to protect bean plants," said Miklas, a plant geneticist at the

agency's Tropical Agriculture Research Station in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. He said genetic resistance is needed because the federal Environmental Protection Agency has banned the use of some chemical fungicides and is expected to restrict others.

Miklas, J. Rennie Stavely of the ARS Molecular Plant Pathology Lab in Beltsville, Md., and James D. Kelly, Scott D. Haley and Lucia K. Afanador of Michigan State University made the discovery in a series of lab and greenhouse studies from 1991-93.

Miklas said the markers will give breeders a clear-cut way to "pyramid" the genes--called Up-2, B-190 and Ur-3--into new varieties that will be naturally resistant to the fungus. In gene pyramiding, several genes can be bred into a plant to give it more durable disease resistance. "It's more difficult for the fungus to overcome several genes than to overcome one," he said.

Traditionally, breeders have combined single resistance genes through a lengthy process of crossing and test-crossing several generations of plants and then exposing them to the fungus. "This can take up to two or more years," Miklas said, "because it's difficult to transfer several resistance genes, since often one gene will mask the presence of another. Using the markers, scientists can determine the presence of each resistance gene within two weeks."

To establish the markers, Miklas said, scientists used a new biotechnology procedure, random amplified polymorphic DNA, or RAPD. In this procedure, they extracted DNA from a bean leaf. Then they used another biotechnology process, polymerase chain reaction (PCR), to amplify parts of the DNA that are linked to specific genes.

The researchers used these procedures on a test population of bean plants--developed by ARS scientists at Beltsville--that were known to contain a specific resistance gene. Then they looked for markers that were present in those plants, but were absent from another group of susceptible plants that lacked the gene, Miklas said.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details contact Phillip N. Miklas, plant geneticist, Tropical Agriculture Research Station, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, P.O. Box 70, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico 00681-0070. Telephone: (809) 831-3435.

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Release No. 0665.93
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LYONS CALLS FOR REFORM OF FIREFIGHTING AIRTANKER PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5 -- Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Jim Lyons announced today his recommendation for updating and reforming the airtanker procurement plan for fighting wildfires.

Lyons testified before the U.S. House Agriculture Subcommittee on Specialty Crops and Natural Resources, chaired by Rep. Charles Rose, D-N.C.

"Our policy will provide for an airtanker and firefighting program which is legal, maintains necessary controls, and is cost-effective," Lyons said. "We will work closely with the Congress in the development of any necessary legislation to implement this policy."

Lyons, under the directive of Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, has been investigating allegations of mismanagement of the Historic Aircraft Exchange Program.

"I want to emphasize the need for a quality airtanker program as an integral part of our firefighting effort," Lyons said.

After reviewing the exchange program that had been in operation under the previous administration, Lyons said he determined that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service would no longer use the Historic Aircraft Exchange Program to acquire military airplanes for conversion to airtankers.

Instead, Lyons is recommending Congress consider legislation that would allow the Department of Defense to sell the excess aircraft through a competitive bid arrangement to reputable airtanker operators. USDA would have the responsibility for maintaining records and would retain a lien on the planes, ensuring their use solely for firefighting purposes.

Initial discussions with representatives of the Department of Defense, Air Force, and Navy have indicated a willingness to support USDA in this initiative.

John Marcus of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Production and Logistics, said: "DOD understands the importance of the airtanker program to wildland fire suppression efforts and wishes to support the U.S. Department of

Agriculture in that program. However, our participation will require passage of legislation providing the appropriate authority for the sale of excess aircraft as well as the necessary control and oversight responsibilities to the Department of Agriculture. We would also look for appropriate restrictions on the use of these aircraft and aircraft parts."

Lyons recommends the use of aircraft and aircraft parts acquired through these sales would be restricted to use only in suppression of wildland fires for the United States. The aircraft could not be flown outside the United States unless prior State Department and USDA agreements exist in support of fire suppression efforts with other nations. The future sale or other disposal of these aircraft by the purchasers would also be restricted and allowed only under tightly controlled circumstances.

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Release No. 0666.93
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USDA RELEASES COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR JUNE

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5--Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for June 1993:

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK IN JUNE 1993

	----- Food plans -----			
	Thrifty	Low-cost	Moderate-cost	Liberal
(in dollars)				
<hr/>				
Families:				
Family of 2				
(20-50 years)	50.50	63.80	78.50	97.60
Family of 2				
(51 years and over)	47.90	61.30	75.30	90.10
Family of 4 with				
preschool children	73.50	91.80	112.00	137.50
Family of 4 with elementary				
schoolchildren	84.20	107.80	134.70	162.10
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Individuals in				
four-person families:				
Children:				
1-2 years	13.30	16.20	18.90	22.80
3-5 years	14.30	17.60	21.70	26.00
6-8 years	17.50	23.30	29.20	34.00
9-11 years	20.80	26.50	34.10	39.40
Males:				
12-14 years	21.70	30.10	37.50	44.10
15-19 years	22.50	31.10	38.70	44.80
20-50 years	24.10	30.90	38.50	46.60
51 and over	21.90	29.30	36.00	43.20
Females:				
12-19 years	21.80	26.00	31.60	38.20
20-50 years	21.80	27.10	32.90	42.10
51 and over	21.60	26.40	32.50	38.70
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USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans -- thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

Janice Lilja, HNIS acting administrator, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods and other nonfood items bought at the store.

"USDA costs are only guides to spending," Lilja said. "Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home."

"Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable," she said. "The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan."

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

-- For members eating all meals at home -- or carried from home -- use the amounts shown in the chart.

-- For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent for each meal eaten away from home from the amount shown for the appropriate family member. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

-- For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart pertain to individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the "individual" figures and make these adjustments (note: larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones):

-- For a one-person family, add 20 percent.

-- For a two-person family, add 10 percent.

-- For a three-person family, add 5 percent.

-- For a five- or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.

-- For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.

Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, HNIS, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

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Release No. 0670.93
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Marci Hilt (202) 720-8998

USDA INCREASES FEES FOR ANALYTICAL TESTING SERVICES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 6 -- Beginning Aug. 9, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase fees it charges for analytical laboratory testing services performed on various agricultural products.

"The fee changes will offset increases in annual personnel costs and in costs associated with improvements in commodity testing operations," said L.P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

Previously, USDA had charged different hourly rates for testing different commodities. For example, the old hourly rate for dairy and meat products was \$28.; for fruits and vegetables, \$25.; and for eggs and poultry product, \$32.11. Under the new fee schedule, USDA will charge \$34.20 per hour for regular laboratory service for all commodities, and \$51.30 per hour for holiday or overtime service, Massaro said.

In a related matter, Massaro said, AMS is reorganizing the analytical testing services, science support services and residue monitoring operations "to promote greater ease in administration of laboratory service and oversight."

Details of the laboratory testing fee increases and internal reorganization will be published in the Aug. 9 Federal Register. For additional information contact William J. Franks, Jr., Science Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 3507-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.c. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 720-3075.

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Release No. 0671.93
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USDA WILL NOT CHANGE 1994 WHEAT ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Aug. 6 -- Under Secretary of Agriculture for International Affairs and Commodity Programs Eugene Moos today said the U.S. Department of Agriculture will not change the zero percent acreage reduction factor for the 1994 wheat program.

This means that wheat farmers will not have to take any land out of production for conservation use to get the benefits of the program.

Under the law, USDA could adjust the 1994 Acreage Reduction Program if the wheat supply had changed significantly since May 28, when the 1994 program was first announced.

"We remain committed to helping U.S. wheat producers stay competitive in world markets," Moos said. "The United States will continue to be a reliable supplier to both our domestic and foreign consumers."

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Release No. 0672.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES 1993 BURLEY TOBACCO GRADE SUPPORT RATES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 6 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced grade loan rates for the 1993 crop of burley tobacco, based on the price support level of \$1.683 per pound.

Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, said the 1993 national support level for burley tobacco is 3.4 cents per pound more than the price support level for the 1992 crop.

Weber said the grade loan rates were developed after consultation with the two burley loan associations through which burley tobacco price support loans are made.

Both burley associations, the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association and the Burley Stabilization Corporation, will deduct one cent per pound from the grade loan rates for administrative overhead costs.

The loan rates range from \$0.62 to \$1.88 per pound for the 1993 crop. For the 1992 crop, the price support level was \$1.649 per pound and the loan rates ranged from \$0.62 to \$1.87 per pound.

CCC will not provide loans on burley tobacco graded N2L, N2R, N2G, No-G (no grade), "W" (doubtful keeping order), "U" (unsound) or scrap.

1993 Crop Burley Price Support Schedule

Grade	Loan Rate	Grade	Loan Rate	Grade	Loan Rate
		(Cents per pound farm sales weight)			
B1F	188	B4D	152	B3GF	150
B2F	187	B5D	144	B4GF	147
B3F	185			B5GF	143
B4F	183	B3K	158		
B5F	181	B4K	154	B3GR	150
		B5K	149	B4GR	147
B2FL	179			B5GR	143
B3FL	176	B2M	181		
B4FL	173	B3M	178	T3F	181
		B4M	174	T4F	175
B1FR	188	B5M	168	T5F	170
B2FR	187				
B3FR	185	B3VF	176	T3FR	181
B4FR	183	B4VF	170	T4FR	175
B5FR	181	B5VF	164	T5FR	170
B1R	188	B3VR	176	T3R	181
B2R	187	B4VR	170	T4R	175
B3R	185	B5VR	164	T5R	170
B4R	183				
B5R	181				
Grade	Loan Rate	Grade	Loan Rate	Grade	Loan Rate
		(Cents per pound farm sales weight)			
T4D	148	C3K	154	X4G	127
T5D	140	C4K	147	X5G	116
		C5K	143		
T4K	144			M3F	138
T5K	135	C3M	171	M4F	133
		C4M	166	M5F	129
T4VF	160	C5M	161		
T5VF	153			M3FR	136

T4VR	160	C3V	174	M4FR	131
T5VR	153	C4V	170	M5FR	129
		C5V	163		
T4GF	142	C4G	142	M4K	107
T5GF	134	C5G	134	M5K	97
T4GR	142	X1F	183	M4G	103
T5GR	134	X2F	180	M5G	99
		X3F	178		
C1L	179	X4F	175	N1L	100
C2L	178	X5F	166	N1F	102
C3L	177			N1R	102
C4L	175	X1L	182	N1G	62
C5L	171	X2L	179		
		X3L	177		
C1F	187	X4L	173		
C2F	185	X5L	166		
C3F	184				
C4F	182	X4M	143		
C5F	180	X5M	138		

Tobacco graded N2L, N2R, N2G, "U" (unsound), "W" (doubtful keeping order), "NO-G" (no grade), or scrap will not be accepted. Cooperatives are authorized to deduct \$1 per hundred pounds to apply against overhead costs.

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Program Announcements-

Release No. 0643.93
 Gil High (202) 720-8998
 Marci Hilt (202) 720-4026

USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON SOYBEAN MARKETING PROGRAM CHANGES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is asking for public comments on two amendments to the national soybean promotion and research program.

One change is aimed at reducing paperwork by eliminating biweekly reports from buyers. The other removes the requirement for the form certifying that a seller is not a producer.

L. P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said eliminating the need for buyers to examine their records twice each month to report and remit commodity assessments would reduce paperwork. Eliminating the requirement for forms establishing nonproducer status for certain transactions would reduce the recordkeeping costs, she said.

"USDA continually reviews its procedures to minimize the public's paperwork burden," Massaro said.

The soybean program, which became effective July 9, 1991, promotes soybean sales in domestic and international markets. AMS monitors activities of the United Soybean Board carried out under the act. The program is funded by industry assessments of one-half of one percent of the net market value of soybeans marketed by producers.

Details of the amendments were published as an interim final rule in the July 30 Federal Register. Comments, in duplicate, should be sent by Aug. 30 to Marketing Programs Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, USDA, AMS, Rm. 2624-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. For copies of the amendments and further information, contact Ralph L. Tapp, Chief, Marketing Programs Branch, at the above address, or phone (202) 720-1115.

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Releases No. 0647.93
 Gene Rosera (202) 720-6734
 Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES, MARKETING CERTIFICATE RATES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 3--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	6.58 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	5.98 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	5.90 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	3.29 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment (LDP) rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are:

	Loan Gain and LDP Rate	Marketing Certificate Rate
\$/Cwt.....	
--for long grain:	\$2.03	\$0.56
--for medium grain:	\$1.84	\$0.52
--for short grain:	\$1.84	\$0.47

These announced prices and rates are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Aug. 10 at 3 p.m. EDT.

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Release No. 0667.93
 Janise Zygmunt (202) 720-6734
 Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, Aug. 5--Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price or AWP), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (leaf grade 4, micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Aug. 12. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Aug. 6 through midnight Thursday, Aug. 12.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the NE price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 82 percent of the 1993 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 3.30 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	42.82 cents per pound
	1993 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	82
II.	USNE Price	59.75 cents per pound
	NE Price	-56.45 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	3.30 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	56.45
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.50
Average U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	- 13.63
Calculated AWP	42.82
Further AWP adjustment	- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	42.82 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	56.45
NE Coarse Count Price	- 52.43
	4.02
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	- 3.20
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT.....	0.82 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991, 1992, and 1993 base quality loan rates of 50.77, 52.35, and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1993-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments (LDPs) will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1993 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain an LDP on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE current price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 2.05 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1994.

Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Price	NE Price	USNE Minus NE	User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate 1/
		cents per pound	
1	July 15, 1993	59.75 (f)	57.09 (f)	2.66	1.41
2	July 22, 1993	60.90 (f)	57.37 (f)	3.53	2.28
3	July 29, 1993	61.60 (f)	57.31 (f)	4.29	3.04
4	Aug. 5, 1993	59.75	56.45	3.30	2.05

1/ USNE forward price minus NE forward price minus 1.25 cents. (f) based on forward quotations.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rates will be announced on Thursday, Aug. 12.

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Media Advisory-

Release No. 0640.93
John Witzig (202) 720-2127
Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

PISTACHIO PRODUCTION REPORT CANCELLED

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service has cancelled publication of the "Pistachio" report, scheduled for release on August 27. This pistachio production forecast for California, which produces nearly all of the U.S. crop, was to be based on objective measurements paid for by the pistachio industry. Earlier this year, industry representatives terminated funding for the forecast.

The pistachio production estimate will be available after harvest is completed in the "Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts" report, to be published in early January 1994.

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